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Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Special Committee decision of 11 August 1998 concerning Puerto Rico

Cuba: draft resolution

The Special Committee,

Bearing in mind the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, as well as the resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee concerning Puerto Rico,

Considering that the decade of the 1990s was proclaimed by the General Assembly, in its resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988, as the Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, and the seventeen resolutions and decisions adopted by the Special Committee on the question of Puerto Rico, contained in the reports of the Special Committee to the General Assembly,

Recalling that 25 July 1999 marks the one hundred and first anniversary of the intervention in Puerto Rico by the United States of America,

Recalling the diverse initiatives taken by the political representatives of Puerto Rico and the United States in the past ten years, which have not expedited the process of decolonization of the people of Puerto Rico,

Aware that Vieques Island, Puerto Rico, has been used for over fifty years by the United States Marines to carry out military manoeuvres, thus limiting access by the civilian population to a space scarcely a quarter of the island, and having an impact on the health of the population, the environment and the economic and social development of the Territory,

Noting the consensus among the Puerto Rican people on the urgency to halt military manoeuvres on Vieques Island and on the return of occupied land to the people of Puerto Rico,

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Noting the consensus among the people of Puerto Rico in favour of the release of Puerto Rican prisoners who, for over fifteen years, have been serving sentences in United States prisons on cases related to the struggle for Puerto Rico's independence,

Having heard statements and testimonies representative of various viewpoints among the people of Puerto Rico and their social institutions,

Having considered the report of the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on the implementation of the resolutions concerning Puerto Rico,[1]

1. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the people of Puerto Rico to self-determination and independence in conformity with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the applicability of the fundamental principles of that resolution to the question of Puerto Rico;

2. *Reiterates* that the Puerto Rican people constitute a Latin American and Caribbean nation that has its own and unequivocal national identity;

3. *Reaffirms its hope*, and that of the international community, that the Government of the United States of America will assume its responsibility of expediting a process that allows the Puerto Rican people to fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence, in conformity with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) and the resolutions and decisions of the Special Committee on Puerto Rico;

4. *Encourages* the Government of the United States, in line with the need to guarantee to the Puerto Rican people their legitimate right to self-determination and the protection of their human rights, to order the halt of its armed forces' military drills and manoeuvres on Vieques Island;

5. *Expresses its hope* that the President of the United States will favourably consider the request before him to release the Puerto Rican prisoners serving sentences in United States prisons on cases related to the struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico;

6. *Notes with satisfaction* the report prepared by the Rapporteur, in compliance with its resolution of 11 August 1998;[2]

7. *Requests* the Rapporteur to present a report to the Special Committee next year on the implementation of the present resolution;

8. *Decides* to keep the question of Puerto Rico under continuing review.

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[1] A/AC.109/1999/L.13.

[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-third Session, Supplement No. 23* (A/53/23), chap. I, para. 41.